

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

85- 3911

October 2, 1985

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In the past we have written to you seeking information about the long-standing problem at the Central Intelligence Agency regarding an apparent analytical bias which continuously under-estimates Soviet intentions and capabilities. Some have even characterized this bias as "pro-Soviet." We posed a series of questions, the answers to which would assist us in reviewing this problem, on April 25, 1985; to date no response has been received.

Now the problem has surfaced in public again. According to a recent newspaper article, the CIA's internal publication Studies in Intelligence, recently published a book review of a volume by two distinguished academic scholars on the topic of Soviet Disinformation. Soviet Disinformation is a very serious intelligence and political problem to which you, Mr. President, have personally called world-wide attention. Soviet Disinformation techniques are part of a larger intelligence problem which entails Soviet "Active Measures"—the so-called Maskirovka techniques of Camouflage, Concealment and Deception.

Yet according to the article attached, the review by CIA's publication reads as though it were written in Moscow. Instead of criticizing the analysis of the authors, it attacks the very concept that Maskirovka actually exists. Indeed, according to the information available, the CIA's review reads like a piece of disinformation itself, and appears to serve Soviet foreign policy interests. Of course, we do not have the actual text, so we ask that you supply the text to us. The article we seek is an unclassified review by Avis Boutell in Studies in Intelligence of the book Dezinformatsia by Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson.

It seems strange for the CIA to be attacking the serious analysis of Soviet Disinformation, when the CIA should be taking the lead in unmasking Soviet Disinformation. This appears to be part of the well-documented, much larger problem at CIA--the long-standing habit of the CIA of under-estimating Soviet intentions and military capabilities. America is now faced with the dangerous implications of Soviet military supremacy, as you have confirmed by at least eight statements you have made since 1982, and by the numbers and trends in comparative U.S.-Soviet armaments.

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In the most important measures of military power, the gaps between U.S. and Soviet capabilities are growing larger, not smaller, despite your vigorous Defense Modernization Program. We are still losing ground to the Soviets—and these gaps will continue to widen over the next five years. In fact, we are over 38 billion dollars behind President Carter's Five Year Defense Program, as you pointed out on March 22, 1985. Thus the "correlation of forces" has indeed decisively shifted against the United States, as Soviet political and military leaders frequently assert.

The bias of the CIA for under-estimating Soviet intentions and capabilities over the last 25 years has already had a deleterious effect on U.S. national security. But the recent implications of information [redacted] suggests that we should inquire further into the problem of this bias. Accordingly, we therefore request answers to the following additional questions as soon as possible:

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1. Why does the CIA produce single-source analysis of Soviet and Communist Chinese open publications such as is done by Foreign Broadcast Information Service?

2. Is there an internal CIA review process to identify possible pro-Soviet bias in published unclassified or classified analytical products?

3. Was the attached article mentioned above screened to detect its possible pro-Soviet bias? If not, why not? If so, why was it published under the official imprimatur of the CIA?

4. Is there a possible pro-Soviet bias in many CIA products over the past 20 years?

5. Is there any evidence of the influence of possible pro-Soviet penetrations, moles or bias in the preparation, analysis and dissemination of intelligence products on the Soviet Union over the past 20 years?

6. Has any important intelligence analysis or evidence related to the Soviet Union ever been withheld or suppressed within or by the CIA? Did any of this intelligence evidence or analysis reveal Soviet deception? What is the Counterintelligence significance of the suppression of intelligence on Soviet deception?

7. Could a possible pro-Soviet bias have played a role in the prolonged and worsening CIA under-estimates of Soviet strategic forces in the 1960's and 1970's?

8. We have recent reports that the CIA:

a.) Has further down-graded Soviet Backfire bomber range

estimates;

- b.) Is negatively reassessing evidence of Soviet Biological and Chemical Warfare arms control violations;

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- e.) Is denying and down-playing evidence of Soviet Camouflage, Concealment and Deception (Maskirovka);

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Are these recent reports correct? Are they best explained by an under-estimative analytical bias, a possible pro-Soviet bias, bureaucratic incompetence, or all of the above?

9. Was John Paisley likely to have been a Soviet KGB mole inside the CIA, who may have been assassinated by the KGB in order to protect other CIA moles? What is the best assessment of Paisley's full career and death? Have traces of other CIA moles ever been detected?

10. Are reports that CIA has regressed into continued under-estimation of Soviet military spending correct? —

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13. Has the CIA consistently under-estimated Soviet global objectives and misunderstood Soviet arms control objectives?

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14. Can at least five years of the 10 year 1980-1990 U.S. "window of vulnerability" be attributed to under-estimates by CIA of Soviet ICBM accuracies?

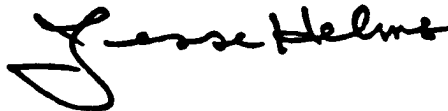
In sum, we strongly agree with CIA Director Casey's initial assessment of the CIA's analytical track record made on February 13, 1981:

"The most frequent criticism is that our [CIA's] interpretations and assessments have shown a tendency to be overly optimistic, to place a benign interpretation on information which could be interpreted as indicating danger. It's our obligation to present conclusions which emphasize hard reality undistorted by preconceptions or by wishful thinking...I found in SALT I, for example, that some of the [CIA] judgements were soft. They leaned toward a kind of benign interpretation rather than a harder interpretation of assessing or viewing a situation as being more dangerous." (Emphasis added.)

We fear, however, that despite Director Casey's best efforts, the CIA's performance has not improved.

Thank you for your prompt response to these important questions. We also again request belated answers to our April 25, 1985 questions (letter attached.)

Sincerely,



Copies to:

Director, CIA
Deputy Director for Intelligence
Director CIA Counter-Intelligence
National Intelligence Officer for Deception
Chief, Arms Control Intelligence Staff

National Intelligence Officers for U.S.S.R. and Strategic Forces
Director, DIA
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
Chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board
Chairman, Intelligence Oversight Board
Chairman, Senate Intelligence Committee

Attachments:

Washington Times Article "Misinformation on Disinformation" (July 16, 1985)
Unanswered Symms-Wallop-Helms letter to the President of April 25, 1985

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FEATURES/COLUMNISTS

WASHINGTON TIMES 16 July 1985 Pg. 1D

Misinformation on disinformation

ARNOLL BEICHMAN

I recently read a review, published in a certain magazine to be identified later, of a book, *Dezinformatsia*, by two respected academics, Professor Richard H. Shultz Jr. of Tufts University's Fletcher School of Diplomacy and Roy Godson of Georgetown University. The review made the following serious charges against this book:

- The book was said to use "specious arguments to prove the obvious."

- It misrepresents reality to prove a simplistic point.

- It is "misguided," exhibits a "total lack of understanding" about Clausewitz, shows "a superficial understanding of current history and the Soviet Union."

- It didn't "fairly report" the content of Soviet journals, it has treated the subject "irresponsibly," it suffers from "extraordinarily naive assumptions" and "erroneous history."

- And the book was said "ultimately" to serve "neither scholarship nor the national interest."

Such harsh language about the published work of academics can be defined as a form of character assassination, since it questions their honor as teachers and researchers. For my part, to be even harsher, I would say that this review could, with little editing, have appeared in a Soviet publication.

Now, then, would you like to guess in what left-wing, pro-Soviet, progressive journal this book review appeared? If you're very smart and sophisticated, you might try and guess, but you'd be wrong. I'll have to tell you:

This book review appeared in an official magazine of the government of the United States, a magazine published by the Central Intelligence Agency — yes, by the CIA under the supervision of the Deputy Directorate for Intelligence that is responsible for all CIA analyses of world affairs.

The publication, a quarterly called *Studies in Intelligence*, is an "in-house" publication. It is not dis-

tributed publicly since some articles are classified; others, such as the book review I am discussing, are unclassified. The essay-review, in the magazine's winter 1984 issue, was written by Avis Boutell, a CIA analyst, who works for the Foreign Broadcast Information Service.

When I read the Shultz-Godson book some months ago to prepare my own favorable review, I found it a cool, scholarly examination of Soviet propaganda and disinformation strategies. So did a number of other distinguished Sovietologists and publicists, such as Professors Adam Ulam and Uri Ra'anani, Dr. Robert Conquest, and Professor Sidney Hook, who wrote the laudatory introduction.

The book, now in its third edition, included what I regarded as highly informative interviews with defectors who had specialized, while in the service of the KGB in the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia, in "active measures." The Soviet strategy of "active measures" involves, for the most part, covert disinformation as "a non-attributed or falsely attributed communication, written or oral, containing intentionally false, incomplete, or misleading information (frequently combined with true information), which seeks to deceive, misinform, and or mislead the target," according to the Shultz-Godson definition.

In other words, the book describes a panoply of Soviet tactics to manipulate the media in the democracies, the use of "agents of influence," sponsorship of clandestine radio broadcasts, and use of international front organizations. These strategies and tactics are excellently described in this important book.

Not only is *Studies in Intelligence* an official government magazine, but it also is published by a U.S. secret service. It therefore must be assumed that whatever is published therein represents the official view of the CIA or, at the very least, the point of view of CIA analysts. As an analogy, a Voice of America editorial, for example, must be approved by responsible State Department officials before it can be read on the air.

If the CIA book review reflects the political culture of the CIA and

the world in which its analysts live, then some of the egregious errors about Soviet intentions made by the CIA over the past 15 or more years, errors which have been publicly discussed in the press and by the two congressional committees on intelligence oversight, become understandable.

One could take apart, paragraph by paragraph, this CIA book review to demonstrate its use of the rhetoric of overkill.

Here I want merely to deal with the political approach of a CIA analyst whose views, no matter what the CIA might say, seem to harmonize with the agency's ethos, which I pray is not that of William J. Casey, CIA director. That this review got past Mr. Casey, I can understand; he has more important problems to deal with. But isn't there somebody in his organization who has the wit, understanding, and common decency to realize that the language used to discuss the Shultz-Godson book might be better suited to a review of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*?

Take this sneering, reductive sentence in the review: "They [the authors] seem less concerned to understand the Soviet Union than to prove that it is irrational and the West totally benign."

Now anyone who has read this book knows that the authors do not seek to prove that the U.S.S.R. is irrational. On the contrary, what they demonstrate is that the Soviet KGB is performing with great skill its assignment to further the Politburo's foreign-policy objectives. The giveaway phrase in that sentence is "to prove... the West totally benign."

Of course, the authors nowhere try to show that the West is totally benign. Such a thesis is irrelevant to the book since it is merely attempting to discuss Soviet "active measures," not the good intentions of the West.

But let's face it: couldn't a victim of Soviet totalitarianism, rotting in one of its prison camps — or an Andrei Sakharov or Anatoly Shcharansky — say that, in comparison to the wholly rational tyranny of the U.S.S.R., the West is "totally benign?"

What the author (and in this, I am sure, the reviewer reflects the views

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July 15, 1985 (16)

Aerospace Daily

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SDI ON SHUTTLE: The Strategic Defense Initiative Organization has reserved two half bays per year on the Space Shuttle starting in 1987.

SDI FUNDING ABROAD: U.S. officials estimate that the U.S. could spend as much as \$1 billion on SDI research undertaken by major NATO allies as well as Israel and Japan.

COST TO ATTACK: Sen. Albert Gore Jr. (D-Tenn.) says the inference of a Congressional Research Service study on the cost to attack is that a force of 500 Midgetman missiles, on mobile hardened launchers, could indeed be destroyed by the Soviets but the price would be a very large portion of their ICBM force. Gore says the cost to attack U.S. silo-based weapons and Midgetman would approximate the entire inventory of Soviet counterforce weapons. In the aftermath of such an attack, he says, the U.S. would still have a "massive bomber force" and, once the Trident D-5 missile is deployed, "a very large and invulnerable second strike force with counterforce capabilities of its own."

NEW YORK POST 16 July 1985 Pg.10

Beirut moves to try hijackers

BEIRUT — A public prosecutor yesterday ordered authorities to investigate and identify the air pirates who hijacked TWA Flight 847 and killed U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem.

If tried and found

guilty, the hijackers could be sentenced to death, said prosecutor Maurice Khawam, whose jurisdiction includes Beirut Airport.

Khawam identified one of the hijackers as Ali Atweh and ordered police

and authorities at the airport to identify the others.

The U.S., seeking an international boycott of the airport, has demanded that Lebanon bring Stethem's killers to justice.

State-run Beirut radio last week named Ali You-

nis and Ahmed Ghorbleh, as well as Atweh, as the principal hijackers.

Legal sources dismissed the investigation as political, saying: "No one seriously believes the air pirates will be arrested or brought to trial."

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of the CIA establishment) clearly rejects (and the targets of the review do not) is the meaning of Marxism-Leninism as a permanent constituent of Soviet foreign policy. What that doctrine means is that Mikhail Gorbachev cannot regard as legitimate any system of rule other than communism. Marxism-Leninism sees other political systems as doomed to fail because of the "contradictions of capitalism."

Since Marxism-Leninism carries the banner of history and the future, the U.S.S.R. alone has the right to judge who shall live and who shall die. That is why negotiation with the Soviet Union, except on its own terms, is doomed to fail until the Soviet Union accepts — in practice, not in joint communiques — an amendment to the eschatology of Marxism-Leninism.

The CIA reviewer demonstrates — let's call it naivete — a surprising naivete in assuming that the Soviet media, during the Nixon-Kissinger-

Ford detente period, out of conviction sincerely ascribed to the West "realistic, positive qualities."

And she attacks the authors for not giving due credit to this thawing of the eternal Soviet winter. Of course, the Soviet media were willing to be kinder and less strident because it was during detente that the U.S.S.R. engaged without Western opposition in the greatest arms-building program of any country in history. The Soviets continue that program to this very day.

But then there came a time when the kissing had to stop. The Soviet media changed the love-dovey, bear-hugging music. What in heaven's name did the West do that forced upon a doting Soviet Union a change of tune, from detente mellowness to cold war harshness? Was the error to accept sadly the destruction of 269 lives on KAL 007? Sadly accept the killing of Major Nicholson? Sadly accept the attempt on the pope's life? Sadly accept martial law for Poland? Sadly accept the

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan?

But let us assume that the reviewer is correct in some of her criticisms. Does that call for a savage rhetorical barrage which borders on high-level billingsgate? Does it call for a cannonade of unprovable charges such as the claims that the book "hurts" the profession of intelligence, and the efforts to develop "a rational foreign policy," and that the book serves "neither scholarship nor the national interest?" If anybody has "hurt" the profession of intelligence, it would be Avis Boutell and whoever edits the CIA magazine.

What kind of behavior is that, William Casey? Is someone down there trying to get even with somebody else?

Arnold Beichman, a founding member of the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence, of which Professor Godson is coordinator, frequently writes about intelligence matters.